

The Role of Travel Agencies in Choosing a Tourism Destination

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Abstract

This paper presents the role of travel agencies in choosing a tourist destination, a choice that is increasingly difficult for tourists due to the many existing offers. The travel agencies, in the tourist activity, have the role of informing and offering consultancy regarding the tourist offers, of organizing, commercializing and distributing tourist packages. They contribute to the development of tourist destinations, greatly influencing market trends and needs. In general, tourists travel for pleasure, but there are other motivations that determine them to choose a certain tourist destination. There are tourists who want to explore new territories, others want to get rid of the daily routine or are looking for social interaction. That is why the travel agency helps them very much in making the best decision when choosing their tourist destination, regardless of the motivation they have.

Key words: travel agency, touristic destination; tourists, tourist products

1. Introduction

Travel agencies are "the basic institutional link, which operates in the field of tourism." [1]

The predominant role of travel agencies is to mediate between tourism service providers and tourists.

In the specialized literature there are opinions, which assimilate to the travel agencies the role of a company with a commercial profile, having as object the organization, offer and sale of tourist packages to the tourist consumers. [2]

The activity of an agency consists in the tourist consultancy, the organization, the offer and the commercialization of some service packages (plane charter, bus charter, cruises, etc.) or their components. [3]

The travel agency is also known as the "travel agency". Therefore, it plays an important role in

the world of tourism and is the main distributor of tourism products.

It has a monopoly on sales because it has two major advantages over other forms of distribution: almost total protection of the consumer of tourism and financial guarantees granted to both tourists and providers. [4]

2. Materials and methods

The main purpose of the research was to identify how much it influences, the information we get from a travel agency, the choice of a tourist destination. Therefore, the methods we use are: research, analysis and comparison.

3. Results and discussion

People need information and before buying a tourist package, they document themselves from various sources and want to have control over the things they will find in the future tourist destination. There are a multitude of factors that

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influence consumers' choices regarding a tourist destination, such as advertising, tourist packages, price, etc.

Therefore, a travel agency, is the one through which we will have the opportunity to travel in the best conditions, and to enjoy a successful vacation from all points of view. It is advisable to take into account several aspects when choosing a travel agency and it is necessary to go to its headquarters, to talk to a travel agent, and to get all the information we need to take the best decisions. It is not difficult to do this because the information we need in this area is quite numerous.

Usually, travel agencies sell service packages that group, within the same program, the services provided by several providers and deal with their advertising and promotion in order to make a profit.

First of all about tourism, we can say that it is one of the most important sectors of the economy, being also the one that can register a fairly high growth in the European economy. We say this even if, in the last period, and in the last years, the tourism has known a descending evolution, but it is still a very attractive field, both for investors and for tourists. But, we can say that tourism is in

a continuous development, especially after the period when there was an economic crisis, and the middle class began to spend more and more money on higher needs, including these, leisure. In these conditions, a market for exclusive tourist services has also developed and there is a fairly large increase in terms of tourism with exotic destinations. [5]

About a travel agency we can say that it is the company, for commercial purposes, which procures and provides to tourists or travelers services in the form of stays and trips, more specifically, the sale or distribution of transport tickets, information on means of transport, luggage transport and cars, hotel services, room reservation, distribution of traveler's checks, organization of visits and excursions, guide services, translation, escort and courier.

The travel agency may rent and resell seats at the theater or cinema, admission rights to sporting, commercial, artistic events, may perform accident or life insurance services, may represent other tourist agencies or structures abroad.

Within a travel agency, the activities are those that bring the income, so their realization must be done carefully, responsibly and transparently.

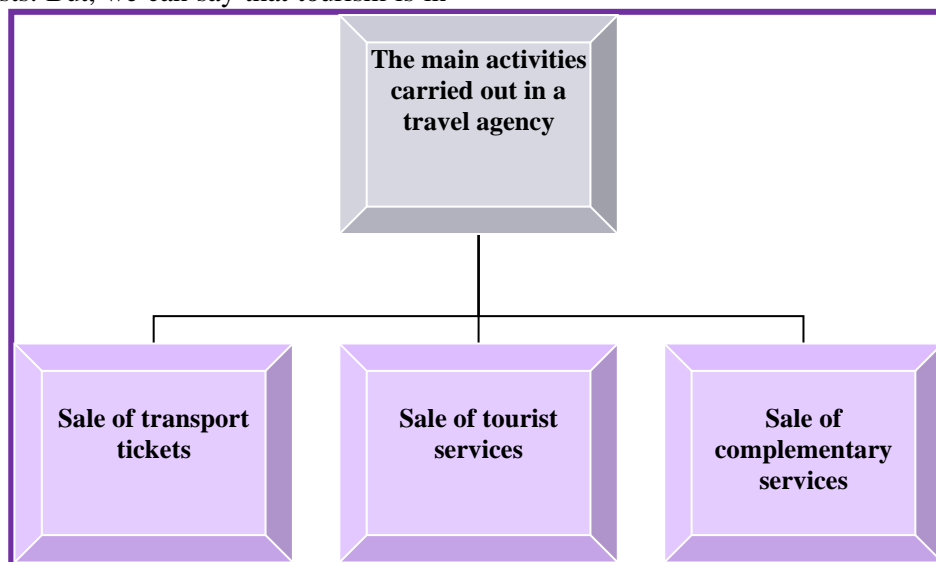


Figure 1. The main activities carried out in a travel agency

Source: <https://administrare.info/economie/6359-principalele-activitati-ale-agentiei-de-turism> [6,7,8]

At the same time, regarding the activities they carry out, we can add about the travel agencies that they are divided into two categories. We can talk about tour operators who have the right to create their own travel programs, and about retail agencies, which are also known as travel agencies.

The latter are resellers and cannot make tourist programs and packages.

If a travel agency acts as an intermediary for a tour operator that is not established in Romania, it is considered as a tourist travel organizer in relations with consumers.

At present, the Romanian tourism market is characterized by an agglomeration of offers and tour operators.

There are several large travel agencies (Paralela 45, J'Info Tours, Marshal Tourism, Eximtur, Perfect Tour, Christian Tour, Prestige Tours, etc., respectively Olimpic International, Aerotravel or

Happy Tour on the business side), which have managed to and create a name on the market and that are known to the public. [9, 10, 11, 12]

Next we will present the number of tourists participating in the tourist actions organized by the travel agencies.

Table 1. Number of tourists participating in organized tourist actions

Specification	Incoming activity		Domestic tourism activity		Outgoing activity	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Tour operators						
- Number of tourists - total	111686	104861	959030	1064115	804610	1007298
Sales agencies						
- Number of tourists - total	10523	1229	187187	231340	349445	117680

Source: Breviarul turistic al României, 2019, 2020 [13, 14, 15]

If we carefully analyze the table above, we can see that the incoming activity is decreasing in 2019 compared to 2018. A significant increase was registered in the domestic tourism activity, and in the outgoing activity, within the tour-operating agencies, an upward trend is observed and within the agencies with sales activity the evolution is downward.

After the analyzes undertaken by us, we can say that the vast majority of Romanian tourists evaluate an offer starting from the budget they have.

We can say that the Romanian tourist does not turn much to a travel agency, only 15% of Romanians who travel for tourism use travel agencies.

Very important for a travel agency is the promotion, both online promotion and verbal promotion, given that customers also document themselves first on the Internet and only then make the purchase decision. That is why the agency's website must be updated with tourist offers and must contain contact details and a contact form in order to be as easy as possible for customers to find.

Another way to promote is to participate in national and international tourism fairs.

In conclusion, we can say that tourists who contact travel agencies prefer the security they provide to the unknown that involves traveling on their own. They are most often more comfortable people, they are involved in organizing the trip only if absolutely necessary, they are based on the

program designed by the agency, which they consider entirely responsible for the smooth running of events.

4. Conclusions

Given the situation we are in, we can say that any travel agency must adapt and become active in the online environment, if it wants to survive in the market.

The more a travel agency provides the services listed by us in this article and even others not mentioned here, the better its chances of attracting as many customer segments as possible.

Reasons why many people choose to turn to a travel agency are: lack of time, prices for complex packages and safety conferred by them.

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